DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 389 120 EC 304 406

AUTHOR	Gonzalez, Patricia
TITLE	States' Use of Discretionary Funds under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A Case Study of Two States.
INSTITUTION	National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Alexandria, VA.
SPONS AGENCY	Special Education Programs (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	Feb 93
CONTRACT	300-87-0155
NOTE	38p.; Prepared by Project FORUM.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc., 1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 320, King Street Station 1, Alexandria, VA 22314 ($13.50).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Case Studies; *Disabilities; Educational Finance; Educational Legislation; Elementary Secondary Education; *Federal Legislation; Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; *Program Improvement; *Resource Allocation; Special Education; Standards; *State Federal Aid; State Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Discretionary Programs; *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B; Michigan; Wisconsin

ABSTRACT

This report discusses the findings from two case studies of state use of discretionary funds under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The two states involved in the study were Michigan and Wisconsin. Documents and interviews were used to gather detailed descriptive information from both states regarding: (1) the establishment of priority areas for Part B discretionary projects; (2) the process for selecting discretionary projects; (3) the use of discretionary funds for the administration of complaint investigation and monitoring; (4) the discretionary projects funded between 1990 and 1992; (5) the discretionary projects funded in 1993; and (6) the evaluation of discretionary projects. The paper also discusses the IDEA requirements with respect to discretionary funds, the importance of flexibility in the use of these funds, and the overall impact of discretionary money on the ability of states to exercise leadership in special education program improvement. (Author)

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STATES' USE OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDS UNDER PART B OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT: A CASE STUDY OF TWO STATES

Patricia Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Project FORUM

February 1993

This study was funded by the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education under Contract Number 300-87-0155. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education or the Office of Special Education Programs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The staff of Project FORUM would like to extend their sincere appreciation to the individuals whose efforts have served to enrich the quality and accuracy of this document.

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ABSTRACT

This report discusses the findings from two case studies of State's use of IDEA Part B discretionary funds. The two States involved in the study were Michigan and Wisconsin. Documents and interviews were used to gather detailed descriptive information from both States regarding:

- the establishment of priority areas for Part B discretionary projects,
- the process for selecting discretionary projects,
- the use of discretionary funds for the administration of complaint investigation and monitoring,
- the discretionary projects funded between 1990 and 1992,
- the discretionary projects funded in 1993, and
- the evaluation of discretionary projects.

The paper also discusses the IDEA requirements with respect to discretionary funds, the importance of flexibility in the use of these funds, and the overall impact of discretionary money on the ability of States to exercise leadership in special education program improvement.

STATES' USE OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDS UNDER PART B OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT: A CASE STUDY OF TWO STATES

Introduction

The Legal Foundation for Federal Discretionary Funds

Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) operates as a state formula grant program that specifies Federal, State, and local responsibilities for providing a free and appropriate public education to all children with disabilities. To support this mandate, Federal funds are distributed annually to States according to the number of students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, determined by the States to be educationally disabled and receiving a free appropriate special education and related services as of December 1 of the previous fiscal year.

Each State's grant award can be divided into two parts. By law, *at least* 75 percent of a State's grant award under IDEA-B must be distributed to local education agencies (LEAs) or intermediate educational units (IEUs) to assist in the education of students with disabilities. This portion is generally referred to as "flow-through" funds. The remaining 25 percent of the award, *at maximum*, may be set aside by the State Education Agency (SEA) for use by the State. This portion is generally designated as the State set-aside.

States can use up to five percent of their total grant award or $450,000, whichever is greater, to cover the administrative costs associated with implementing the IDEA. The remaining set-aside of 20 percent may be used at the discretion of the SEA for either or both of two purposes: (a) to pay for direct and support services for children and youth with disabilities, or (b) to cover a portion of the State's administrative costs for complaint investigation and monitoring activities. The provision of set-aside funds for direct and support services (often referred to as discretionary funds) has been part of the IDEA since 1975. As defined in CFR 300.370, *direct services* means services provided to a child with a disability by the State directly, by contract, or through other arrangements. *Support services* include implementing the comprehensive system of personnel development requirements, recruitment and training of hearing officers and surrogate parents, and public information and parent training activities related to ensuring a free, appropriate, public education for children with disabilities.

Since the enactment of the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986 (P.L. 99-457), States have been allowed to spend set-aside funds designated for direct and support services to cover the administrative costs of monitoring activities and complaint investigations, to the extent that these costs exceed those incurred in FY 1985.

As in the case of direct and support services, funds used for this purpose are drawn from the portion of the set-aside remaining after allocating for SEA administration. Consequently, should States choose this option, a portion of the funds available only for direct and support services would be used for administering complaint investigations and monitoring activities.

State Variability in the Use of Discretionary Funds

During the passage of P.L. 94-142, Congress recognized that this law would establish a new partnership between Federal, State, and local agencies responsible for providing educational services to students with disabilities. In particular, the new mandates would force State agencies into the roles of monitor and leader in ensuring the rights provided by law (U.S. General Accounting Office, 1985). Acknowledging these new roles, Congress made provisions for a "discretionary" portion of the Part B State grant award that would allow States to accommodate their various needs with respect to educating students with disabilities. In effect, States may choose the activities they wish to support with discretionary funds and then describe the activities in their State Plan[1]. The flexibility of the law with respect to the use of discretionary dollars enables States to exercise leadership and innovation to improve and expand services to children and youth with disabilities according to their own needs and priorities.

In the summer of 1991, NASDSE conducted an informal analysis of the activities supported by Part B discretionary monies during FY 1990. Brief descriptions of these activities, frequently excerpts from State Plans or Part B Performance Reports, were sent to NASDSE by 45 of the 50 States. A content analysis of these descriptions resulted in 19 broad categories of activities, including Staff Development/CSPD, Financial Support for High Cost Services, Parent Training and Services, Materials Development and/or Dissemination, and Program Development and Innovation. A summary of the analysis which contains the categories and the number of States using discretionary funds under each category is provided in Appendix A.

Further review of these data suggested that the 19 categories of activities could be described as serving one or more of the following purposes in the implementation of the IDEA:

(1) providing direct services to children, youth, and families (e.g., the purchase of assistive devices, preschool "Child Find" activities, student evaluations);

[1] The regulation requiring a description of direct and support services in each State Plan can be found at 34 CFR 300.149.

(2) providing technical and financial assistance to LEAs/IEUs (e.g., resource centers, evaluation centers, materials development);
(3) exercising SEA leadership in statewide initiatives that address emerging or critical issues or fill gaps in the overall implementation of the IDEA, including the dissemination of innovative practices (e.g., computer data systems);
(4) providing staff development/CSPD; and/or
(5) providing parent training or services.

While the uses for discretionary funds can be summarized under relatively few topical and functional categories, the activities themselves represent a myriad of different processes and outcomes associated with the provision of special education to children and youth with disabilities and their families. It is the richness and diversity of the activities supported by these funds, and the funding processes themselves, that the present study was designed to portray.

Description of the Study

This investigation employs a case study approach to capture a complete picture of how two States plan for and use discretionary funds to improve programs and services for children and youth with disabilities. Wisconsin and Michigan were selected for this study because their variability in the use of these funds, taken together, is representative of many of the other States.

During data collection for this study, both States provided documentation[2] and participated in interviews that contributed to a detailed description of each State's funding priorities as well as the actual activities supported by discretionary funds during FY 1990-93. Information was also given regarding how priorities were selected and how the monies were allocated and dispersed. Whenever possible, the reasons behind certain decisions or the adoption of certain procedures were obtained from SEA personnel to enrich these descriptions.

[2] Some of this documentation included sections from one or more State Plans, Part B Performance Reports, LEA Applications, SEA and State Board memoranda, statutes, evaluation studies, and internal reporting documents.

Michigan

Overview of Discretionary Allocations

All State discretionary projects are funded solely by Federal IDEA, Part B monies. For FY 1990 through 1992 Michigan used approximately 10 percent of their Part B grant award for discretionary projects, including direct and support services. Michigan does not use discretionary monies for the administration of complaint investigation and monitoring. The dollar allocations for direct and support activities are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Dollar Allocations for Discretionary Purposes
Michigan - FY 1990-92

Fiscal Year	Direct & Support
1990	$4,950,000
1991	$5,642,000
1992	$5,400,000

Discretionary monies are allocated to support State Initiated Projects (SIPs) which represent a number of activities, programs, and services that address state priorities for action to improve the education of children and youth with disabilities. The SIPs provide services and produce products and results that can be duplicated or disseminated to the field to strengthen, remediate, or introduce new special education programs and services to students. The next sections of this report will describe the methods for designating priorities and for selecting and funding SIPs.

Designating Priorities for Program Improvement

Potential priority areas are identified by the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Special Education (OSE) on a three-year cycle to correspond to the writing of the State Plan for implementing Part B of the IDEA. The priorities are established by the staff based on concerns expressed by the field, results of OSE monitoring activities, and the emerging needs and changing demographics of students with disabilities in Michigan.

The Director of OSE presents the proposed priorities for SIPs to the Special Education Advisory Council for their input. Following review and refinement by the Council, the priorities are incorporated into the draft State Plan. The entire State Plan then goes to public hearings which solicit input from the field on the priority areas for discretionary projects as well as other aspects of the Plan. Most recently, public input on the 1992-94 priorities was sought via a telemeeting that joined 28 sites and 334 people across Michigan. Over 400 ideas were shared through this process. Later, the input from the telemeeting was organized and the priorities changed or adjusted based upon this input.

The State Board of Education reviews the public comment and the content of the plan, including the three-year priorities for SIPs, and provides its approval before the Plan is submitted to OSEP. The approved priorities represent broad areas of need with respect to special education programs and services in Michigan. For example, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, Dispute Resolution, and Technology were identified in the 1989-91 State Plan while Curriculum, Emerging Non-Traditional Populations, and Working with General Education were included as priorities for 1992-94.

Selecting and Funding State Initiated Projects

The major portion of Michigan's discretionary funds is awarded to local and/or intermediate school districts (ISDs) through a *competitive* grant process. Organizations and agencies receive another portion of the funds through a *non-competitive* grant process which is used when there is reasonable proof that only one organization or agency in Michigan (i.e., a sole source) has the capacity to address the specifications of the OSE. In these instances, a contract is negotiated between the OSE and the organization.

The competitive bid process is devised for school districts; however, agencies, universities, and organizations may participate in the grant proposal. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is developed by the project manager at OSE. The RFP consists of a project description that includes goals, objectives, and outcomes, in addition to requesting information on the proposed budget, program design, and evaluation components. Notices describing the projects to be funded and requesting applications are placed in newsletters or mailed directly to school districts, organizations, and agencies. Applicant meetings also may be held.

Competitive proposals received by the Department of Education are reviewed by an impartial panel consisting of Departmental staff as well as practitioners from the field. Once the reviewers are confirmed, a packet is mailed to them that contains (a) the RFP, (b) a copy of each proposal submitted, (c) an evaluation form/score sheet for each proposal, and (d) a comment summary sheet for each proposal.

The process for reviewing and selecting proposals has three stages. In the first phase, the individual reviewers read and score the proposals using the forms provided in the packet at a time and place of their choosing. In the second phase, the reviewers come to the State capital to form panels that discuss and rank the proposals. Lastly, the project manager asks the reviewers to suggest ways of improving the proposal. The selected projects are presented to the OSE administrators for review and confirmation before these suggestions are used in final negotiations with the successful bidder(s).

Once the finalists have been selected, the OSE prepares a "State Board Item", a memorandum that includes a description of each project, name of the recipient, and the amount allocated to the project. With Board approval of this listing, successful and unsuccessful bidders are notified and OSE initiates the actual funding process through the Department Services Grants Approval Unit. Long-term projects usually are granted three years of funding in order to complete project objectives; however, each project must apply to the OSE and the grants office for the new-year funds and be approved annually. Approval is given pending a positive review of both the annual project application and the year-end final report. Final reports are examined by OSE for adherence to timelines and goals, as well as project accomplishments and outcomes. OSE Federal Grant staff review the new-year applications for consistency, budget expenditures, projected goals, and objectives. In addition, the project manager reviews these applications for content and current-year goals and objectives. Comments and recommendations from the project manager are forwarded to the Federal Grant staff. Any concerns arising from this process are resolved by the Federal Grant staff in concert with the project manager. Approved projects are included in an annual "spending plan" that lists the various projects and the amount allocated to each.

Evaluation of Discretionary Projects

Individual project evaluations. Each project applying for discretionary monies is evaluated in part on their written evaluation plan within the proposal. They receive a 1-5 rating on a sub-item under Project Design which reads, "Evaluation plan allows for sound appraisal of the project objectives." Funded projects provide evaluation results annually in the final report.

Statewide evaluations of SIPs. The OSE conducted a two-part evaluation of SIPs beginning in FY 1988 (Hwalek, 1988). In the first study 15 SIPs, primarily those that were charged with disseminating information and/or materials, were evaluated. The purpose of the study was to determine the level of awareness and utilization of these projects by four groups of consumers: special education administrators, teachers, parents, and organizations serving special education populations. Opinions regarding the SIPs (e.g., satisfaction) were also solicited from each group.

The results pertaining to the variables of awareness, utilization, and opinion varied among the 15 projects. Overall, however, teachers and parents were much less aware of the projects than were administrators. This finding prompted a second study (SPEC Associates, 1988) that looked specifically at dissemination issues affecting these same projects. The second study concluded that Intermediate School Districts did not have standardized methods for disseminating information. Additionally, special education information provided by the SIPs was fragmented and sometimes difficult to obtain. Recommendations were offered for coordinating and streamlining dissemination methods and adopting different dissemination approaches for use with parents. The results of these studies were used internally to redirect projects toward making their services more visible to consumers. Additionally, OSE began to "publicize" the projects that were less well known, and to reconsider future funding and directives for each of the projects. A Michigan Department of Education staff evaluator continued to review these projects from 1989-91. However, since that time the evaluator position has been eliminated.

Discretionary Projects - FY 1990-1992

The FY 1990-92 priorities for SIPs were determined during the development of the 1989-92 State Plan. The eight priorities were Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, Dispute Resolution, Improvement of Instruction, Information Dissemination, Program Improvement, Secondary Transition, Technology, and Unmet Needs. A brief description of each priority appears in Appendix B. Twenty-seven different projects were funded under these priorities during 1990-92.

Michigan has chosen to fund a number of SIPs for multiple years, some since the late 70's, and under the auspices of several State Plans. During the period 1990-92, there were 20 projects funded for all three years. These 20 projects were allocated approximately 92 percent of the total proposed allocation for SIPs each of these years. Table 2 contains a list of these projects, the date funding began, and a purpose statement. Notes for this table appear on page 26. Many of these "ongoing" projects provide direct services and have specified roles, functions, and clientele within the statewide special education service delivery system. Projects that provide services statewide are preceded by an asterisk in Table 2. Several additional SIP projects were funded for at least one year during the 1990-92 period under study. These projects are described in Table 3.

Table 2

Listing of Projects Funded in Michigan During FY 90-92

Project Areas and Titles	Start Date	Purpose
DIRECT SERVICES		
* Special Education Learning Materials Centers (SELMCS)	before 1980	Implements local/regional personnel development programs and purchases materials and supplies
* Living and Learning Resource Center (LLRC)	1986	Provides evaluations and technical assistance regarding assistive devices, including microcomputers
* Center for Adaptive Aids and Equipment (PAM)	1979	Provides information to school districts relating to assistive devices and their use
* Center on Materials for the Visually Impaired	1979	Provides media and consultation to students with visual impairments
* Statewide Communication and Dissemination System (SCADS)	1977	Maintains an information/communication link between LEAs, ISDs, OSE, and others
Center for Quality Special Education[3]	1988	Collects, coordinates, and disseminates information related to the effectiveness of special education, including program evaluation
* Very Special Arts	1986	Enhances fine arts programs for students with disabilities
TRAINING		
* Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)	before 1980	Provides OSE directed, statewide personnel development
* Parent Training Programs	1986	Provides statewide information and training to parents
INNOVATION		
* Special Education Technology Plan (Project Access)	1984	Provides technical assistance to districts on instructional and management applications of technology
Special Education Enhancement Grants	1988	Provides "seed" money for creative approaches to programming[4]
Alternatives to Special Education[5]	1986	Funds for developing alternative models of special education program and service delivery
Teacher Minigrants	before 1980	Provides funds to teachers for particular projects[6]
Special Education Research[7]	1980	Provides special research and evaluation studies on various aspects of special education
OTHER		
Multiply Handicapped Hearing Impaired Program	1990	Provides for the unmet needs of students residing at the Michigan School for the Deaf.
* Project Find	1979	Coordinates statewide efforts to identify children
* Special Communication Devices[8]	1984	Funds augmentative and assistive communication devices and evaluations
Unmet Needs	before 1980	Funds to districts to help defray the high costs associated with out-of-district placements or litigation (i.e., an emergency fund)
* Mediation	1986	Provides an alternative form of dispute resolution
* Coordinators of Planning, Monitoring, and Data Collection/State-Operated Facilities	1986	Supports personnel in the ISDs and facilities[9] who assist in monitoring, data collection, and planning

* Denotes projects providing services statewide

Table 3

Projects Funded in Michigan for a Portion of FY 1990-92

Project	Years Funded[10]	Purpose
Medically Fragile	90, 91	To provide information on transporting medically fragile students
SIP Evaluation	90, 91	To systematically evaluate ongoing SIPs to determine if they are meeting their service objectives
Longitudinal Study of Health Impaired Pupils	90	To develop informational packets to share with districts concerning chronically ill children with hearing problems
Career and Vocational Education	90	To support a statewide effort to begin supported employment programs within districts, funds for training and materials
Special Data Analysis	92	To assist the OSE in meeting Federal data reporting requirements
Outcomes Training Project	92	To train schoo. personnel in the use of the outcome indicators for various disabilities being developed by OSE

Two of the more successful long-term SIPs were entitled, *Coordinators of Planning, Monitoring, and Data Collection* and *State-Operated Facilities*. The recipients of these grants are all 57 ISDs and three State agencies (i.e., The *State-Operated Facilities* grants go to the Departments of Corrections, Social Services, and Mental Health). During fiscal years 1990, 1991, and 1992, each of these entities received a $30,000 grant under this project totalling approximately 33 percent of Michigan's discretionary allotment. The primary purpose of the grant under both SIPs was to support a coordinator position responsible for the following tasks: (1) develop a plan for the ISD or agency facilities; (2) monitor the special education programs and services; (3) conduct investigations; (4) collect data, including but not limited to the December 1 student count; (5) coordinate grants; and (6) provide technical assistance.

The Michigan OSE has found this project to be advantageous in promoting a high degree of compliance in the provision of special education within local schools and residential facilities. The project has been continued in FY 1993, but with a shift in emphasis from regulatory requirements to programmatic features that directly impact the student. The project is now entitled, *Enhancing Opportunities for Students with Disabilities*. Although the position of coordinator can still be supported by these funds, the expanded purpose of the grant is to use these funds to provide quality services that meet the individual needs of students. To accomplish this goal, two activities have been added to the responsibilities (above) of the Coordinator in the FY 1993 grants: improving programs and services, and assuring a continuum of programs and services.

[10] Funding for these projects could have begun prior to 1990.

Discretionary Priorities and Projects for FY 1993 and Beyond

A telemeeting strategy, described in an earlier section, was employed in the spring of 1991 to gather ideas for new priorities from interested parties across the State. These ideas, along with those from State advisory groups and personnel, were integrated into eight major themes (priorities) that at minimum will guide the Michigan OSE until 1994 under the current State Plan. These priorities are Continuum of Educational Options; Curriculum; Emerging, Non-Traditional Populations; Infants and Young Children; Automated and Service-Oriented World of Work; Transition; Working with General Education; and Program and Student Evaluation. They are described in Appendix C.

The majority of projects in Table 2 continued to receive funds in FY 1993. Of the shorter-term projects funded in 1992 (refer to Table 3), the *Special Data Analysis* project was terminated, but the *Outcomes Training Project* received continued funding. With respect to proposed allocations, four projects were recommended for increases, including the *Parent Training* project. There were no proposed decreases in funding among the continued projects.

Two new SIPs were added for FY 1993. The first, *Special Needs Program at Michigan School for the Blind*, will provide diagnostic and resource services for an outreach program to assist LEAs in evaluating visually impaired students. The second project directly addresses the new priorities and is called, *Special Education Theme Project*. Eligible grantees include local and intermediate school districts. To successfully compete for these funds the grantee must demonstrate that their program or service will improve the quality of special education. The goals and objectives of the proposal should be product-oriented, to include print publications, conferences, video tapes, policy development, or program evaluations.

The Theme Project received approximately 9 percent of the total proposed allocation for FY 1993 which, given the number of projects funded (21), shows the determination of the OSE to lead the State of Michigan toward new priorities in special education during the next few years. The changes reflected in the new priorities can be characterized as a de-emphasis of regulatory issues and a re-emphasis of factors that contribute to the quality of student services and outcomes. For example, there is a change in focus between the old grant, *Coordinators of Planning, Monitoring, and Data Collection*, and the new grant, *Enhancing Opportunities for Students with Disabilities*. Emphasis in the new grant is on quality service provision irrespective of specific ties to regulation.

The OSE is also considering changes in the types of programs funded with Federal discretionary monies. The primary consideration at this time is to reduce the number of

long-term projects in favor of shorter-term projects that can stay current with State needs. However, some long-term projects will need to be retained, particularly those that provide direct services and those not easily duplicated.

Wisconsin

Overview of Discretionary Allocations

All State discretionary projects are funded solely by Federal IDEA, Part B monies. For FY 1990-92 approximately 20 percent of these funds were allocated for support services only (i.e., no funds were used for direct services or for the administration of complaints and monitoring). In Wisconsin, the purpose of discretionary funds has been to support development and demonstration projects that have relevance statewide, regionally, or within urban areas. Projects also must address the State superintendent's priorities. Priorities are established with input from the public and from the State Advisory Council. The total dollar allocations for discretionary projects during the three-year time period under study are provided in Table 4.

Table 4

Dollar Allocations for Discretionary Purposes
Wisconsin - FY 1990-92

Fiscal Year	Support Services
1990	$5,742,656
1991	$6,120,846
1992	$7,097,491

Use of Discretionary Monies for Complaint Investigation and Monitoring

Prior to the 1992-93 fiscal year, Wisconsin has not used discretionary monies for the administration of complaint investigation and monitoring. Only Federal Part B administrative funds and State funds have been used to support these activities. The future use of discretionary funds to augment staff or to support current required monitoring or complaint activities is being studied by Department of Public Instruction (DPI) staff.

Designating Priorities for Program Improvement

The priority areas for the FY 1990-92 State Plan were identical to those contained in the FY 1986-89 State Plan. A needs assessment of the field during the development of the 90-92 State Plan indicated the need for continued work on the same priorities. In fact, it has been the experience of the Wisconsin DPI that often five years or more are required to address adequately the various aspects of broadly-stated priorities. It is not uncommon, therefore, for a priority to be represented in more than one State plan.

To define the priority areas for emphasis during FY 1986-89, the DPI employed an extensive needs assessment process. This process began with the State advisory panel using a nominal group technique to identify issues of concern in serving children with exceptional education needs. These issues were then incorporated into a survey designed to solicit input concerning their relative importance from individuals and groups interested in the education of children with disabilities. Respondents also were encouraged to add any issues not expressed in the survey. Over 1,200 surveys were completed and returned. The input from the surveys was incorporated into six priorities, confirmed for both the 1986-89 and 1990-92 State Plans through public hearings.

For the 1993-95 State Plan the process for identifying and validating the State's discretionary priorities changed somewhat from the previous years'. The new process was completed in three stages. First, separate nominal group processes involving the staff of the DPI and the state advisory panel were used to identify issues of concern in educating children and youth with disabilities. As part of the process, the members of each group were asked to come to a meeting prepared to answer the following question, "What should be the five to seven priority areas driving special education for the next three years?" In responding to this question they were asked to consider such factors as the new IDEA amendments, educational initiatives contained in the State Superintendent's budget proposal, and emerging best practices and research.

During the second stage of the process, the results from the DPI and advisory group meetings were shared with the Regional Service Network Coordinators from each of the twelve Cooperative Education Service Agencies[11] (CESAs). The coordinators, in turn, convened local advisory groups and/or focus groups to construct their own list of priority issues. These lists then were returned to the DPI for consideration. Finally, letters were sent by the DPI to over 60 education interest and advocacy groups requesting their priority issues. Among the respondents were Wisconsin's School

[11] There are 12 CESAs in Wisconsin governed by the school districts they serve via a board of control. CESAs provide a multitude of programs and services to school districts and other educational agencies throughout the State. Examples of services include curriculum development assistance, research, data collection, and inservice program development.

Psychologists Association, Council for Exceptional Children, Council of Administrators of Pupil Services, and Vocational Association. DPI reviewed the issues submitted by each of these groups and collapsed them into six broad priority areas that form the basis for discretionary funding for at least the next three years. The newly formed priority areas were later confirmed at public hearings.

Selecting and Funding Discretionary Projects

LEAs, CESAs, County Handicapped Children's Education Boards[12] (CHCEBs), the State Schools for the Deaf and for the Blind, and the DPI are eligible to receive Part B discretionary monies. At the beginning of each year, the DPI publishes a booklet entitled, *Project Application Guidelines for Education Funding for Children with Disabilities*. Along with the grant application, it is distributed to the district administrator (superintendent) of every school district in Wisconsin. This booklet contains the requirements and application forms for IDEA discretionary projects and a description of the priorities for the upcoming year. Also provided in the booklet are the criteria for reviewing discretionary grants. The criteria are included to assist applicants in the writing of the proposal. There are eight review criteria that address several broad areas, including adherence to the priorities, innovation, replication, clarity of design, adequacy of the supporting literature, adequacy of the budget, program evaluation, and completeness of the application. It is also recommended that projects be developed in conjunction with appropriate DPI consultants. The consultants are encouraged to assist the applicants in making additions or changes in the proposal that reflect best practices and the intent of the priorities.

As applications are received (applications for the 1992-93 school year were received in May, 1992) they are logged-in and attached to comment sheets that outline the eight criteria for proposals (stated above). They are first reviewed by at least two consultants in appropriate disability or service areas, then all the applications are sent to the first level of management (i.e., Section Chiefs and the Bureau Director). These administrative staff review the comments by the consultants and conduct their own evaluations of the proposals. Projects that are recommended for funding at this level of the review process are typically those requesting second and third year funding, those that most closely meet the conditions of the priorities, and those that have implications statewide.

[12] There are 6 CHCEBs remaining in the State of Wisconsin. They are established by the County Board of Supervisors to organize, equip, operate, and maintain special education programs and services for school districts in the county.

Next, a meeting is arranged between these managers and the Assistant Superintendent for the Division of Handicapped Services (i.e., the "State Director" of special education) to review suggested proposal approvals or denials. Then, the list of all projects (approved and cut) with justifications is given to the State Superintendent for his/her final approval. He or she signs the notification letters and the grant award documents by July 1. If needed, the DPI works with the new grantees to make adjustments in their proposals. The revised project proposals then are approved and the grant award issued. The above process is formally endorsed each year by the State Advisory Panel.

The successful applicants are asked to attend one meeting during the school year to share information with other project staff in the same priority area. Discretionary projects are assured funding for only one year, but can re-apply for funding for up to three years. At the end of the year, every project must submit a report that contains program evaluation information and a fiscal summary. An agency wishing to continue project funding for an additional year needs to submit the End of Year Report along with a new application. For projects funded for more than one year, the funding levels typically change annually. In the first year, projects may receive full funding (i.e., the amount requested in the proposal), or as close to that figure as the final discretionary budget permits. In each subsequent year of funding, the amount is reduced. The rationale for decreasing funding over time is to encourage the local and/or regional education agency to commit funds in support of the program. An early commitment of local dollars increases the likelihood that the program will be maintained after Federal funding ceases.

Evaluation of Discretionary Projects

For FY 90-92 the evaluation process required of discretionary projects by the application and End of Year Reports was designed to:

- allow project operators to evaluate their own activities using appropriate evaluation activities;
- provide a reporting framework designed to assist project operators meet their own and the DPI's needs for evaluation information; and
- have sufficient flexibility to interface with the requirements of Chapter 115 (Wisconsin statutes), IDEA, and P.L. 89-313 without duplication of effort and/or excess developmental costs.

Project operators were responsible for implementing the local evaluation as described in the application and submitting an evaluation report based on the components and the activities within the application 30 days following the end of the project (July 30).

This evaluation report required the project operator to supply an overall rating of the successful implementation of the project's objectives on a seven-point scale from "low" to "high". The form also requested reasons for this rating.

In an effort to improve both the quality and usefulness of the evaluation information, this process was changed for FY 1993. The End of Year Report now requires that each of the program goals be listed separately and scored on a five-point scale from "met" to "not met". All products developed with project funds must be listed on the form. Projects that apply for a second or third year of funding must send the completed evaluation form and **samples of the products** along with the new application. The purpose of increasing the evaluation demands on discretionary projects is ultimately to make the information more useful to other agencies that might consider replicating the project. The evaluation information from the projects within each priority also will be pulled together by DPI staff and examined to determine whether or not the projects are adequately addressing the overall intent of the priority.

Discretionary Projects - FY 1990-1992

Wisconsin has used discretionary funds to support four projects for multiple years, including FY 1990-92. The "long-term" SEA-operated projects are:

- **CSPD** - funded 14 years as of FY 1992. The project involves statewide staff development activities such as workshops, seminars, or curriculum guides that address current critical issues in special education.

- **Education for Employment/DVI/VE** - funded 13 years as of FY 1992. This project funds a statewide coordinator of the designated vocational instruction program. Designated vocational instructors (with special education training) are located in LEAs and CESAs throughout the State to provide vocational training to students with disabilities. The coordinator position also serves as a liaison between special and vocational education at the State level.

- **Funds for the Wisconsin Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired** - funded 11 years as of FY 1992. These monies support a variety of projects which change over time, depending upon the needs of the schools. Recent activities have included community outreach and improvements in interpreter services.

- **Administrative Training Project** - funded 11 years as of FY 1992. This project represents a joint activity of local special education directors,

universities, and the DPI to plan leadership activities and training opportunities for special education administrators.

The FY 1990-92 priorities for discretionary projects were determined initially for the 1986-89 State Plan and retained for the 1990-92 State Plan. A total of 440 projects, including those above, were funded between 1990 and 1992 under at least one of the six priorities and one "sub-priority"[13]. The next section contains descriptions of each priority taken from State documents along with a brief summary of two representative projects.

Transition From School to the Adult Environment. The SEA recognizes the need to establish strategies for assisting students with disabilities to make a successful transition from school to independent living and employment. Effective school to community transitions depend upon in-school curricula, parent involvement, coordinated interagency relationships, and improved employment opportunities, among other factors. Approximately 114 transition projects were funded between 1990 and 1992.

- Apartment Project (River Falls) - The intent of this project was to assist students and their families to determine least restrictive and appropriate living arrangements as part of the transition planning process. It provided apartment living experiences for youth with disabilities as well as an opportunity for teachers to accurately assess and instruct students in independent living, recreation, and social skills.

- Schools Allied for Lasting Employment (Marathon Co. HCEB) - This project used Vocational Training Specialists already employed by the districts to expand employability skills training and job training for youth with disabilities and "at risk" students.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. The SEA is responsible for the development of State, regional, and local inservice presentations that are organized to maximize information sharing and program content. The focus of this priority is both to improve inservice/information system capabilities and offer direct leadership and other support for training programs that respond to specific topical issues. Approximately 127 CSPD projects were funded between FY 1990 and 1992.

- Rural Education Assessment Consultant Team (Marathon Co. HCEB) - This project used a diagnostic consulting team to address the following goals:

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[13] The sub-priority, *Recruitment, Employment, and Retention of Special Education Teachers*, was added in FY 1991 when it was determined by the State Advisory Council to be a substantial need in Wisconsin. Since the 1990-92 State Plan was already in effect, it was added as a sub-priority until it was incorporated into the 1993-95 State Plan as a priority.

to provide new and provisionally certified teachers with training in the M-Team/IEP process (e.g., student assessment); to provide individual consultation in the area of assessment; and to provide general inservice on assessment instruments and techniques with an emphasis on curriculum-based assessment.

- Project Assist (CESA 03) - This project emphasized the provision of staff development, mentoring, and networking opportunities for emergency licensed, newly hired, and veteran teachers. Staff development activities focused on curriculum improvement and teaching strategies.

Recruitment, Employment, and Retention of Special Education Teachers. Local educational agencies are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit, employ, and retain fully trained, certified, and licensed special education teachers. The SEA assists and encourages local education agencies in supporting teachers employed on emergency licenses in areas of critical need. For FY 1991 and 1992 there were approximately 50 projects addressing this priority.

- Mentorship Program: ED (Milwaukee) - The goal of this project was to provide a mentorship program for the training and support of new and provisionally licensed teachers assigned to students with emotional disturbance. Members of the target group paired up with a master teacher and worked cooperatively to solve problems and address needs.

- CSPD (CESA 5) - This project supported several staff development activities, including a region-wide conference, a series of regional workshops on the M-Team and IEP processes, and the Beginning Teacher Assistance Program that employed a mentorship model for both regular and special education teachers.

Integration of Handicapped Children with Nonhandicapped Age Peers. One of the legal and philosophical foundations of both State and Federal special education law is the emphasis on providing, to the maximum extent possible, education and related services in an integrated environment. The SEA encourages the development of efforts and innovative approaches to integrating children with disabilities with nondisabled age peers in the school, community and the home. Projects funded under this priority totaled approximately 143 from FY 1990 to 1992.

- LRE Training (CESA 04) - The goal of this project was to train members of IEP committees to implement a documentable student planning process that results in the systematic application of LRE principles and the identification of barriers to the provision of an appropriate education environment.

- Vocational Truancy (CESA 07) - This project was designed to provide students with severe emotional disturbance or learning disabilities who are also truant with an alternative educational program that consisted of students spending one-half their day in an academic program and rest of the day in a vocational program. The goals were to reduce truancy and prepare students for post-school employment.

Developing Improved Educational Programs for High Cost/Difficult to Serve Populations. The need to establish new educational programs for students with severe or multiple disabilities places a heavy burden upon local districts. The SEA is committed to providing technical support and limited term special funding assistance to school districts seeking to establish innovative educational programs for this population. Between 1990 and 1992 there were approximately 137 projects addressing the needs of high cost/difficult to serve populations.

- Family Project for ED Children (Sheboygan) - This project supported three parent educator/social worker positions that provided an intensive home training and support program for the parents of elementary aged students with emotional disturbance. The goal was to increase the achievement, positive behavior, and self-esteem levels of these children.

- Social/Emotional Needs of HI (CESA 06) - Through the use of specific curricula, peer group support, and parent and professional training, this project sought to meet the social/emotional needs of hearing impaired students in a rural setting.

Improvement of Curricular Practices in Special Education. The need for curriculum improvement is as significant for special education as it is for general education. In some instances there is a need to adapt the general curriculum while in other instances there is a need for a specially designed curriculum unique to special education. The SEA continues to support both innovative approaches to developing special education curricula and specific curriculum modifications. Approximately 112 projects were funded under this priority during the period 1990 through 1992.

- EEN Curriculum Modification (Monroe) - The goal of this grant was to write, adapt, and improve curriculum for students with disabilities, including science, social studies, word processing, and social skills curricula.

- Curriculum Improvement: Business Communications (Lodi) - This project used a partnership of special and regular educators and the business community to design a curriculum that incorporated the competencies for Basic Skills, Career Exploration, Planning and Decision-making, and Employability Skills and Attitudes.

Innovative Uses of Technology. There have been extensive advances in the application of computer based technology to special education. This technology has been effectively utilized by educational agencies in instructional programming, personnel support systems, inservice and information dissemination programs, and special education program management. The SEA encourages and supports the development of new uses of technology that are particularly innovative and hold unusual promise for improving special education programming and information dissemination. Approximately 55 projects were funded under this priority between FY 1990 and 1992.

- Innovative Technology (Eau Claire) - The goals of this project were to develop and use technological programs for students 3 -21 in the areas of communication, learning, recreation, and vocational skills; to provide training to teachers, parents and community agencies; and to coordinate services with area hospitals, universities, and community agencies.

- Augmentative Communication (CESA 6) - This project provided on-going evaluation and technical support to nonverbal students, teacher inservice, and training modules. It also developed a model classroom that demonstrated the successful integration of verbal and non-verbal students.

Discretionary Priorities and Projects for FY 1993 and Beyond

Wisconsin used a nominal group process within the SEA, together with input from the field, to derive new priorities for the 1993-95 State Plan. Several of the new priorities address issues or needs similar to those in the last State Plan, including the recruitment and retention of new teachers, CSPD, and transition. These priorities are considered long-term goals. SEA personnel also point out that even when the names of priorities change, they tend to still include some of the previously identified needs. For example, aspects of the former priority, *Improvement of Curricular Practices*, can be found in the new focus on outcomes. Similarly, the new *CSPD* priority places some emphasis on difficult to serve populations and integration, both of which were separate priorities in 1990-92. These changes demonstrate how the SEA assumes a leadership role in finding new approaches to continuing needs within the State.

Each of the priorities from the 1993-95 State Plan are described below[14] with two projects from FY 1993 provided as examples. Approximately 198 projects were funded for 1993, including the four long-term SEA projects described in the preceding section

[14] With each description is the number of projects funded under the priority for FY 1993. Since a project can be funded under more than one priority, there is an overlap in these figures.

(i.e., *CSPD, Education for Employment, Funds for the Wisconsin Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired,* and the *Administrative Training Project*).

Improve Recruitment, Preservice Training and Retention of School Personnel. Public input into the State plan highlighted a need for teacher training institutions to better train new teachers so that they understand the realities of today's student needs and are able to integrate special education and regular education. Public input noted the need to provide inservice and leadership training for existing school personnel. Funds may also be used to support teachers employed on emergency licenses in areas of critical need. During 1993, approximately nine (9) projects were funded under this priority.

- University-based Support for Provisionally Certified Teachers (CESA 07) - This project provides for on-going support and training of LD and ED provisionally certified teachers in their own classrooms by university staff. In addition, teachers are assisted financially to complete the provisional certification program at the university.

- Retention and Recruitment of Special Educators (CESA 12) - This project is designed to provide financial assistance to provisionally certified staff, make applicable coursework more accessible, and provide support and consultation. It also affords recognition to fully certified staff.

Align Special Education Initiatives With Education Reform Agenda. "Regular" education reforms are coming at the same time special educators are implementing more integration of special and regular education. Much of the education reform debate at the national and State level has not specifically addressed the needs of individuals with disabilities. Thus, the department funds projects which create a defined role for special educators and parents in educational reform areas, such as team-building activities for regular and special educators, designing strategic plans for school restructuring, implementing outcome-based education models, and providing training and follow-up for total quality management designs. Approximately 35 projects were funded under this priority in 1993.

- Restructuring For All (Middleton-Cross Plains) - This project supports inservice and other team-building activities that lead to the implementation of site based management, outcome-based education, and authentic assessment practices.

- Collaborative Outcome Based Education (Oregon) - The goal of the project is to promote the meaningful integration of special education and regular education in grades K-3 using the Deming philosophy of quality and the Outcome-based Delivery Model strategy for instruction and evaluation.

Promote Transition Activities. One of the significant amendments to the IDEA is the requirement for transition services planning in the IEP for all students age 16 and above. This initiative parallels Wisconsin's own School-To-Work legislation for ALL students. Thus, a significant thrust of this priority is to promote ways of including students with disabilities in all the school-to-work initiatives emerging in Wisconsin. The projects will be evaluated on their attention to improving the school outcomes of productive employment, community participation, and post-secondary education and training for students with disabilities. Approximately 35 projects addressing transition needs across Wisconsin were funded in 1993.

- Transition/Community Based Career Exploration (Superior) - The goal of this project is to improve transition services for students with disabilities by providing community-based training opportunities. The grant funds personnel who establish training sites and serve as job coaches.

- Integrated Transition/Tech Prep (Whitehall) - This project has four goals: to conduct a transition needs assessment among school and community resources, to expand the activities of the Transition Steering Committee, to increase communication about and visibility of Transition/Carl Perkins activities, and to continue work experience placements for secondary students.

Improve the Learning Outcomes for Children With Disabilities. Much of today's reform efforts promote a shift from ensuring proper procedural process and programmatic inputs to measuring accountability by documenting improved student outcomes/learning. The department supports innovative approaches to evaluating programs and processes in terms of student outcomes, including the evaluation of different instructional approaches, longitudinal studies of student progress, and the use of portfolios and authentic assessment. A large number of funded projects in FY 1993, approximately 85, will address this priority.

- IEP: Vehicle for Implementing Outcomes (CESA 07) - This project seeks to identify the technical college prerequisites/competencies expected of incoming freshman, and then to adopt them as outcome goals reflected in the IEPs of students with disabilities.

- Students with Special Health Needs, Etc. (Kenosha) - This project has several components: (1) to conduct a needs assessment of educators and families involved in services for children with special health care needs, (2) to collect information on community services available for this population, 3) to establish a support group of parents and educators, (3) to conduct staff development projects related to the needs of this population, (4) to

establish a lending library, and (5) to implement a case management system for individuals with special health care needs and their families.

Empowering Parents and Involving Families. Study after study has shown parent involvement, both at school and at home, to be a key to any successful school program. In turn, the IDEA has empowered parents as partners with school professionals in the decision-making process concerning their child's special education. Families need access to education, training, and support not only to be effective advocates and helpers for their children, but also to be strong and healthy families. DPI funds innovative projects under this priority that emphasize training parents to be advocates for their children and better informed partners with school personnel in the special education decision-making process. For 1993, there were approximately 32 projects addressing this priority.

- Table Talk/Empowerment Process (Ladysmith-Hawkins) - The project proposes a series of informal dinner meetings between LEA staff; families of children with disabilities; and representatives of community businesses, agencies, and organizations. Information exchange occurs on topics such as transition, community integration, and supports for daily living.

- Transitioning Together (Clintonville) - This project supports workshops, attended by both parents and educators, that promote working together and joint problem solving. These workshops are videotaped and made available in the public library. Another component of this project is to put the new partnerships to use in conducting computer/technology assessments of students in special education.

CSPD for Staff Development and Leadership Training. Over the past several years the DPI has developed a CSPD framework for staff development and leadership training at the State, regional, and local levels which allows the department to provide training, respond to issues, and facilitate change. During FY 1993-95 the department will focus on improving inservice/information system capabilities and offering direct leadership and other support for training programs. Consideration is given to the development of public awareness programs and to providing information and inservices to general educators and students without disabilities. Staff development activities were proposed by approximately 29 funded projects in FY 1993.

- Expanding CSPD Opportunities Through Cooperative Programming (CESA 02) - This project (1) utilizes the expertise of CESA staff, (2) increases opportunities for staff development at a regional and local level, and (3) provides "state of the art" information to teachers and administrators using an information portfolio approach.

- RSN: Leadership and CSPD for Change (CESA 08) - This project has two major goals. The first goal is to provide staff development activities that keep special educators knowledgeable of the educational reform movement and its potential impact on special education. A second focus is to conduct staff development activities that promote the culture and leadership for change and reform in special education.

In addition to new projects and priorities, the Wisconsin DPI anticipates some changes in the overall direction of their Part B discretionary projects. As described in the section on evaluation, the SEA has implemented new requirements for individual project evaluations. The purpose of these revisions is to gain more information of value at the State level in determining the collective impact of these projects on the priority needs. Ultimately, it may be possible for the SEA to use this information to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of discretionary projects.

Another change contemplated by the Wisconsin DPI is to fund more large projects. The reasoning behind this discussion is that larger projects can have an impact over a broader area, potentially statewide, and can be better evaluated in terms of their impact. In turn, projects that have demonstrated effectiveness are more likely to be replicated and maintained over time.

Conclusions

This study involved an in-depth examination of the use of Part B discretionary funds by two States. The descriptive data presented above suggest some of the areas of variability among States in the processes and outcomes associated with the use of Part B discretionary funds, including the types of services supported (direct *and/or* support), the review process for discretionary projects, and the funding of long-term versus short-term projects. Such variations are a natural consequence of using these funds to address the individual needs of the States which differ depending upon such factors as the tax structure supporting State and local education, the geographical size of the State, urban versus rural population distributions, and resident per capita income.

Differences notwithstanding, both States in this study, as well as the majority of other States, use a significant portion of these funds to provide State leadership in improving the quality of special education programs and services - a function which has had a significant impact on the ability of the field to assimilate and put into practice innovative philosophies and practices. For instance, efforts to unite special and regular education are apparent in the 1993 priorities of both Wisconsin and Michigan. Projects that explore new technologies, ways of measuring student outcomes, and effective

transition services also continue to be supported. In addition to local demonstration projects, both States extend knowledge and practice in these areas through inservice, resource centers, and technical assistance supported by discretionary funds.

SEA staff in both Michigan and Wisconsin indicated that the discretionary portion of the Federal Part B grant award continues to be of enormous benefit to implementing both the substance and intent of the IDEA. It allows States to fulfill their supervisory role by providing funds to shore up weak spots in local implementation and thereby assure full and equitable implementation of the law. Moreover, with the SEA leadership and financial assistance permitted by these funds, localities are able to pursue a vision of what special education could be; to be proactive, rather than reactive; and to test novel approaches to processes and products that will enhance the education of children and youth with disabilities.

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Notes for Table 2

[3] The Center for Quality Education was re-titled and expanded in 1988. From 1986-1988 it was known as the Model Program Information Center.

[4] Some examples of enhancement grants include arts programs that integrate general and special education, a thinking skills program, an intramural basketball program, and development of "giant" books and tapes.

[5] This SIP received declining allocations between FY 1990-92, indicating that the goals and objectives of this project were being met.

[6] Teacher minigrants have been awarded to support the development of academic and non-academic talents, to purchase supplies and materials, and to expand instructional opportunities.

[7] In FY 1993 this project was eliminated. Examples of activities previously conducted under this grant were the Michigan Education Assessment Program, post-school follow-up of graduates in special education, and an analysis of statewide child count data.

[8] This was legislatively enacted in 1984 as part of the School State Aid Act. The Act required that discretionary money be used each year to provide augmentative communication devices to students with a communication impairment. In FY 92 it was removed from the State Aid Act, added to the federal flow-through allocation, and disbursed to districts on a per capita basis.

[9] State-Operated Facilities funds one coordinator each for corrections, mental health, and social services to ensure the all facilities run by a particular service meet special education requirements. This position also serves as the liaison to the Department of Education.

Appendix A: Categories of Activities funded by Discretionary Monies in FY 1990 & Number of States Engaging in Each Activity

Category of Discretionary Activity	Number of States
Program Development / Innovation	32
Staff Development / CSPD	29
Financial Support for High Cost Services (including transportation, evaluation, or placement)	21
Parent Training or Services	15
Materials Development & Distribution	14
Regional/Statewide Resource Centers	13
LEA Technical Assistance	12
Services for Institutionalized / Hospitalized / Incarcerated Students	11
Assistive Devices	9
Low Incidence Programs	8
Computer or Technological Improvements	8
Policy Studies	6
Preschool Initiatives	5
Evaluation / Assessment Centers	5
Interagency Collaborative Projects	5
Student Data Systems	4
Special Education Program Evaluation	4
Child Find Initiatives	3
Infant Programs	1

Appendix B: Priority Areas for SIPs in the 1989-1991 Michigan State Plan

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. Michigan identifies priorities and administers leadership through statewide inservices which meet the needs of parents, teachers, and administrators.

Dispute Resolution. Opportunities exist for advocates and school officials to resolve differences of opinion relating to the appropriateness of each student's IEP. Michigan is seeking ways to resolve differences in a manner that is less costly, less adversarial, and less time consuming while maintaining all rights of the parents and school districts to their procedural safeguards afforded under the law.

Improvement of Instruction. There will always be advancement in the areas of teaching strategies, techniques, methods, and materials. The State of Michigan believes it has a leadership role in this important area of special education. Efforts to coordinate and communicate successful practices will lead to a delivery system that is current and consistent with quality opportunities for our youth.

Information Dissemination. It is believed that an informed constituency creates an environment that is conducive to quality. The State Education Agency has an obligation to provide current and accurate information to parents, teachers, and administrators. Information includes announcements of statewide conferences, legislative initiatives affecting youth with disabilities and their parents, policies, data, innovative programs and practices.

Program Improvement. Efforts will be made during the next three years to fund projects designed to improve the delivery of programs and services to our youth with disabilities. Attention will be focused on curriculum, least restrictive environment, quality program indicators, alternatives to suspension and expulsion of youth with disabilities, and cooperative efforts with State agencies as well as other areas needing improvement.

Secondary and Transition Programming. Michigan has taken steps to improve its secondary and transition programming but much more work needs to be done. Emphasis will be given to curriculum, community based instruction, vocational education, supportive employment, and developing ways for the student to assimilate effectively into the out-of-school environment.

Technology. The use of technology in the classrooms and as a means of assisting students with disabilities has become obvious. The State of Michigan has a technology plan which is designed to maximize the potential for technology in the educational setting. Projects will be funded which are consistent with the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Unmet needs. Projects will be funded which will assist the State in dealing with issues which are timely and require attention. An example would be appropriate services for students who are medically fragile. It is not possible to accurately predict what issue, trend, or concern area may surface during the fiscal years covered by this Plan, but funds need to be available to meet the need when it arises.

Appendix C: Priority Areas for SIPs in the 1992-1994 Michigan State Plan

Continuum of Education Options. Projects in this area will look at alternatives for improving instruction in regular education settings and for non-traditional methods of educating students with disabilities presently being served in self-contained classrooms or facilities.

Curriculum. Grants will be provided to adapt or modify regular education curriculums for pupils with disabilities and to review and approve special curriculum as needed for this population. This will coincide with the State Board of Education's School Improvement efforts.

Emerging, Non-traditional Populations. Projects will be designed to develop and improve service for new and emerging populations such as: children born with fetal alcohol and fetal drug syndrome, the medically fragile including students with traumatic brain injury, bilingual children with disabilities, special education eligible pupils with attention deficit disorder, and other new and emerging populations.

Infants and Young Children. Emphasis will be placed on working in cooperation with other agencies to increase the identification and service to infants and young children and to enhance prevention and early intervention services.

Preparing Students for Automated and Service-Oriented World of Work. The use of technology both in instruction and in preparing pupils to move into the world of work will be emphasized with grants from this area. As in the past, efforts will be coordinated with Vocational Rehabilitation and Vocational Educational Services.

Transition. One of the most important responsibilities of OSE is to assist pupils with disabilities to move into community life, the world of work, and on to higher education where possible. Grants will be developed under this theme to enhance transitional services.

Working with General Education. Since the majority of pupils with disabilities are in general education for the greater part of their school day, grants will be available to assure that regular educators have the support necessary to help improve the population of students with disabilities they are serving.

Program and Student Evaluation. Systematic program evaluation is needed so that supervisors and directors can self-evaluate the effectiveness of their programs. This can be done by developing standards of quality or quality program indicators which can support decisions that may lead to improvements in programs and services. Student evaluations also are needed that can judge success not by what is taught but by what is learned. Grants will be made available to identify quality indicators for program and student evaluations.

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